

**ARIZONA OUTDOOR RECREATION COORDINATING COMMISSION
(AORCC)
OF
ARIZONA STATE PARKS (ASP)
Peoria City Council Chambers
8401 W. Monroe St
Peoria, AZ
August 14, 2008**

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

(Note: In the absence of Chair Bell, Commissioner Bittorf as senior member agreed to act as Chair for this meeting.) Acting Chair Bittorf called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. Ms. Shulman took the roll and announced that there was a quorum.

Commission Members Present:

Mary Ellen Bittorf
William Schwind
Devin Rankin
Karla Brady

Commission Members Absent:

Jeff Bell
Ken Travous
Larry Voyles

Arizona State Parks Staff:

Jay Zieman, Assistant Director
Doris Pulsifer, Chief of Grants
Pat Dutrack, Grants Coordinator
Bob Baldwin, Grants Coordinator
Danielle Silvas, Grants Coordinator
Ruth Shulman, Advisory Committee Coordinator

Guests:

Alan Nelson, La Paz County Sheriff's Office
Rob Just, City of Tucson Parks and Recreation

B. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

Members and staff introduced themselves.

C. ELECTION OF AORCC CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Ms. Brady moved to table the election to the next meeting. Mr. Schwind seconded the motion, which carried with no further discussion.

D. ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of Minutes from the June 12, 2008 meeting.

Mr. Schwind moved to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Brady seconded the motion, which carried with further discussion.

2. Consider Request from La Paz County Sheriff's Office (LPCSO) to Carry Over Balance from FY2007 LEBSF Funds to FY2008 Funding Cycle

Alan Nelson of the LPCSO spoke on the request. He noted that LPCSO had \$17,770.19 left from the LEBSF allocation for FY2007. LEBSF allocations are based on boating usage days in the various counties. The LPCSO deputies received an increase in salary of 12%, which affected the mid-range salary. Mid-range salary is another metric used to determine LEBSF allocations. Lt. Nelson said that he had requested that ASP Staff solicit more current metrics to use for the funding periods FY2008 through FY2010, but the request was denied. He went on to note that the LEBSF funds were allowed to be carried forward from cycle to cycle because of funding increases and expanded allowed grant items in FY2006.

Lt. Nelson noted that LPCSO had been affected by the timing of disbursements. He is requesting the carryover be allowed because LPCSO's allocation has been reduced for the upcoming funding cycle based on salary and boating usage days changes. The carryover funds will allow LPCSO to carry on with their boating safety program. He also noted that many counties had their allocations increase. He also said that if the \$17,770.19 were redistributed during the next funding cycle, LPCSO would receive only \$2,800 in the redistribution. He also noted that if these funds were not retained, they may have to cut several seasonal deputy jobs. Additionally, Lt. Nelson noted that if LPCSO retained the \$17,770.19, it would also eliminate the ability of the legislature to "sweep" the LEBSF funds.

Mr. Schwind asked why LPCSO did not spend the money when it was received. Lt. Nelson said that the scope of allowable expenditures had been expanded. During the FY2007 cycle, allocations increased, and funds not expended were carried over to allow for newly permitted expenditures to be made. Additionally, during this past funding cycle, LPCSO was out-of-phase with La Paz County's budget cycle, leaving these funds unspent. Considering LPCSO's expenses, Lt. Nelson sees no problem in expending these funds if they are allowed carry-over.

Mr. Schwind asked ASP Staff about the project agreement signed by all LEBSF participants, stating that funds will be spent during the current funding cycle. He asked whether Staff's recommendation is to disallow this request. Ms. Pulsifer said that while Staff appreciates the LPCSO situation, Staff notes that the participant agreements are signed before distribution of funds. This agreement stipulates that any unused funds will be returned to the LEBSF "pot". Staff's concern is that allowing this carry over will set a precedent and change policy. Staff suggests that if all the counties were to, as a group, make this request, Staff could bring the joint request to AORCC for consideration. Mr. Schwind asked if

AORCC's decision on this matter would be final, or would it continue to the ASP Board for their decision. Ms. Pulsifer said that the recommendation of AORCC would be forwarded to the ASP Board for final action.

Lt. Nelson said that LPCSO is aware of section 4 of the participant agreement stipulating that funds will be returned, which is why LPCSO is making the request for the carry over. He also noted that last year funds were allowed to be carried over. Lt. Nelson also said that this would be the last such request made to AORCC and the ASP Board if this carry over is approved. He said that it will be impossible to under spend the future reduced allocations.

Ms. Brady moved to recommend denial of the LCPSO request to carry over the funds. There is no question of the value of an effective water safety program, and no question of the need. However, this will create a policy/procedural issue. Mr. Schwind seconded the motion, which carried with no further discussion.

E. PRESENTATION OF GRANT APPLICATIONS

Ms. Pulsifer began by noting that this presentation represents the funding recommendation for grant applications received for FY2008 grant funding. At AORCC's immediate prior meeting, the eligible applications were presented to AORCC prior to being scored. Two grant programs will be presented today, which are Local, Regional and State Parks (LRSP)/Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Trails Heritage Fund applications. An update on the State Lake Improvement Fund (SLIF) program will be presented later in the agenda. Ms. Pulsifer said that grant rating teams were established, met to discuss the criteria and the rating process, and also met to rate the applications. Applications are rated on their own merits, and not considered in relation to other applications of the same year, or in relation to other applications from the same entity in prior years.

Ms. Pulsifer said that both grant programs being presented today are Heritage Fund programs. This means that when ASP's share of Heritage Fund revenues from the state lottery is fully funded, ASP receives \$10 million dollars. Of that money, LRSP receives 35%, and Trails Heritage receives 5%. Ms. Pulsifer introduced Pat Dutrack, who coordinates the LRSP program.

a. Presentation of FY 2008 Local, Regional and State Parks Heritage Fund/Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Applications

Ms. Dutrack said that the Staff recommendation was on page 12 of the agenda packet. The LRSP portion of the Heritage Fund was fully funded at \$3.5 million. However, the ASP Board set aside \$700,000 of those funds to purchase a property alongside the Boyce-Thompson Arboretum State Park. A further \$700,000 will be deducted from next year's Heritage Fund allocation. Additionally, the same amount for each year was taken from the Historic Preservation Heritage Fund grant program.

Ms. Dutrack noted that by statute, no single entity can be awarded more than 20% of the total available funds. This year, the cap was \$621,814, which affected three grant applications. Staff worked with those applicants to increase their matching funds and/or decrease the scope to bring those applications in line with the cap amount. Ms. Dutrack also noted that the ASP strategic plan states that funds should be awarded to high-priority projects. High-priority projects are those scoring 80 points or above. For LRSP, the goal is that 75% of the awards go to projects scoring 80 or above; two projects scored below 80. For this cycle, 6 projects scored 80 points or above. The funding list is on page 14 of the grant packet. The first seven projects can be funded with the LRSP funds; the eighth project can be funded in part by LRSP and in part by LWCF. There is approximately \$3.1 million available to fund, and approximately \$2.9 million in recommended funding for grants, leaving \$147,663 for carry over. If those funds are not carried over, they may be awarded this cycle. A representative of Tucson Parks and Recreation is in attendance to speak on that matter. Staff recommends funding \$2,961,405, and that the first eight grants be funded, and also that the recommendation be forwarded to the ASP Board for final approval.

Mr. Schwind asked about the LRSP funding. Ms. Dutrack said that the first seven grant applications can be funded with LRSP dollars. The eighth application can be funded partially with LRSP, and partially with LWCF dollars. Mr. Schwind clarified that the uncommitted balance of \$147,663 would be from LWCF funds, which Ms. Dutrack confirmed. Mr. Schwind asked whether any projects below the strategic plan line would be eligible for LWCF funds. Ms. Dutrack noted that if the strategic plan were strictly adhered to, the remainder of the funds could be allocated to another project.

Mr. Rob Just from Tucson Parks and Recreation spoke on the application to fund Juhan Park in Tucson, which scored below the strategic plan line. Mr. Just noted that he understood the unallocated LWCF may be eligible to fund Juhan Park. The park is approximately 15 acres near downtown Tucson, and currently has one unlighted softball field, a restroom and a ramada. The long-range plan is to develop four lighted softball fields for tournament level play for the El Rio Baja league. He provided other details from the grant application scope list, and also discussed the amount of public support for this particular project. He also read a letter from the El Rio Baja league, noting they're commitment to providing athletic opportunities for young women in Tucson.

Ms. Brady asked Mr. Just about reducing the scope of the project, and which items would be taken out of the scope. Mr. Just noted that there is funding from the City of Tucson in an unconfirmed amount that may allow the project to retain its original scope. These funds would come from impact fees. Mr. Just noted that the job-order contracts allow for a less constricted bid format, and also would allow for adjustments to construction costs. He did say that if something needed to be removed from the project, it would be the concession building. Ms. Brady said that cutting the concession building may not reduce the scope enough.

Mr. Schwind asked what percentage of the project design phase is complete. Mr. Just said the design phase is 90% complete. Mr. Schwind noted that job-order contracting may not be the wisest choice for construction work in the current economic situation. Mr. Just noted that the Tucson Parks and Recreation office has an expansive job-order contract program with six contractors on board. The six competitively bid for contracts. The construction of this project is on a tight time frame, and the job-order contracts allow for time savings.

Mr. Schwind asked ASP Staff whether the project would be eligible for LWCF funding with the reduced scope. Ms. Dutrack said it would be, if AORCC and the ASP Board would work with the City of Tucson to ensure at least a 50% match. Ms. Brady asked if this project were approved, the strategic plan would be funding more than 25% of projects that scored 80 points or more. Ms. Dutrack said that as a rule, Staff recommends funding to the strategic plan line, but that the ASP Board is not enjoined from funding below that line with any funds left. Ms. Brady noted that she would prefer to see a defined budget and other documentary support for the use of the funds before recommending approval of the project. She asked how Staff would handle that lack. Ms. Dutrack said that, given the programming of the grants database, the first seven projects do show more information. The amount of the grant funding for this project would be limited to the \$147,663 on hand. The grant information would be provided in total to the ASP Board before their meeting to approve grant applications. Ms. Brady asked if Tucson was aware that LWCF funds charged a 10% surcharge on awards. Ms. Dutrack and Mr. Just both responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Schwind commented that he had considered, prior to hearing Mr. Just, recommending to Staff that they consider funding the application from Yavapai County. This would fund a school project in a rural community. The score of the actual application may be based on the necessarily shortened narrative describing the project. If another project were to be awarded funding, Mr. Schwind recommends the Yavapai County project.

Ms. Brady said that she is a strong proponent of the value of the scores. She does not feel that rural communities are unable to show strong planning and need in their grant applications. She would not support bringing forward a project with only 55.5 points. Ms. Bittorf said that she feels in the past, that AORCC has paid attention to the points system, and if low-scoring projects were funded it would be detrimental to the program.

Ms. Brady moved that AORCC support Staff's recommendation to approve the eight highest-rated grant projects, as well as approving the Juhan Park project in Tucson contingent on a balanced budget including a 50% match. Ms. Rankin seconded the motion, which carried with no further discussion.

b. Presentation of FY 2008 Trails Heritage Fund Grant Applications

Bob Baldwin spoke on the Trails Heritage Fund applications. The Trails Heritage Fund was fully funded this year, and with substantial carry over from the previous grant cycle as well the return of committed but unexpended funds, the total available was \$739,501. Grant requests added to \$832,578, and all projects could therefore not be funded. Staff's recommendation is that the seven highest scoring projects be funded, which meets the strategic plan and leaves an uncommitted balance of \$5,273. Mr. Schwind asked to confirm that the project completion period is 3 years, following the signing of the participant agreement. Mr. Baldwin confirmed that this is true both for Trails Heritage and LRSP.

Mr. Schwind moved that the seven eligible projects with the highest rating scores be approved for funding at \$734,228 and that this recommendation be forwarded to the Arizona State Parks Board for final action. Ms. Brady seconded the motion, which carried with no further discussion.

F. REPORTS

1. Parks Board Actions on AORCC Items

Ms. Pulsifer said that the ASP Board has considered one item forwarded by AORCC at their last meeting. That item was the request presented by ASCOT to reduce the match required of Trails Heritage Fund grant applicants. The ASP Board approved the request. This means that cities, counties, tribes and state agencies now have a match of 25% of the total project cost. This was approved for a three-year trial basis. Federal level applicants continue to have a 50% match.

2. State Lake Improvement Fund (SLIF) Grants

There were twelve SLIF applications received, totaling approximately \$6.5 million. In May, the legislature "swept" approximately \$4.1 million in SLIF funding for FY2008. It was unknown as of the June meeting when the SLIF applications were presented to AORCC what measures would be taken by the ASP Board regarding SLIF. At their July meeting, the ASP Board decided to cancel the SLIF awards for this year. They are on record as expressing deep reluctance to cancel the grants, but under the circumstances of the state budget, it seemed prudent. They recommended that Staff retain the grant applications for the next grant cycle, in order to accommodate the applicants and not require them to re-do the entire process. The applications were not rated this year, so they will be competitive with any new applications received for a future cycle.

3. Arizona State Trails Plan 2010 Update

Tanna Thornburg, Chief of Planning, was not able to attend this meeting, but she did provide a written report found on page 69 of the agenda packet. There are numerous surveys to be undertaken, and the plan is midway through that process. The statewide phone surveys have been completed, and both land managers and open web-based survey are continuing. Workshops to gain further

public input on trails in Arizona have been scheduled for this fall. Ms. Thornburg will update AORCC on the survey results, presumably at the October meeting. The Trails Plan is scheduled to be completed next year.

G. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

**H. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS, MATTERS OF BOARD
PROCEDURE, REQUESTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

None. However note the tabling of the election of Vice-Chair until next meeting.

I. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

October 9, 2008 – Phoenix, Arizona State Parks Boardroom

December 11, 2008 – Phoenix, Arizona State Parks Boardroom

J. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Schwind moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Rankin seconded the motion, which carried with no further discussion. The meeting adjourned at 1:50pm.